



Backcountry Views



A Message From The Superintendent

Welcome to the first stage of the planning process for developing a Backcountry Management Plan for Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve!

The Backcountry Management Plan will amend our 1986 General Management Plan for the park and preserve in response to emerging challenges and continued protection of the nationally significant values for which the area was set aside in 1980. This effort will be conducted in a regional planning context in collaboration with local communities as well as broader national interests. These days we all recognize that a national park is not an island of itself but a protected area of special values within a region of other important land uses and diverse human interests.

As its title suggests this plan will focus on recreational uses of the wilderness and backcountry within the park and preserve as well as the commercial services

necessary to support those activities. Other important park uses like traditional subsistence activities are addressed in other plans.

This plan involves preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement and will benefit from the specific requirements for continuous public involvement inherent in that process. We anticipate that this effort will take about 3 years to complete.

This is the first issue of the quarterly **Backcountry Views** newsletter. In this manner we will keep you informed of the process as it develops. The schedule of upcoming public scoping meetings is the first order of business. Scoping of issues and concerns in an open house format will begin in larger towns and cities in early November to be followed by local scoping meetings in the many communities surrounding the park. We are enclosing the one-time NPS Regional Scoping Newsletter that

describes the statewide process for backcountry planning being initiated. The dates and locations for the 4 urban scoping sessions are described there.

I want to invite you to join us in our efforts to preserve the many heritage values of this area for the benefit of both present and future generations. You may contact us via the internet at gaar_backcountry_planning@nps.gov or by sending mail to me at 201 First Avenue, Fairbanks, Alaska 99701 or calling (907) 457-5752. All documents will be linked to our website at www.nps.gov/gaar for continual electronic participation.

Thank you for your interest in Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "David D. Mills".

David D. Mills
Superintendent